

Frequently Asked Questions

CONSUMERS

1. How can I get a copy of my pet's medical records?

Business and Professions Code section 4855 states that a veterinarian shall provide a summary of the patient record to the owner of the animal receiving veterinary services, when requested.

2. My veterinarian has moved or closed down, how can I get my records?

Each managing licensee of a veterinary facility is required to maintain a current address of record. If the facility has moved or closed down, the VMB recommends that you contact the Board for the most recent address of record and then send a written request for a summary of your animal's records to that address. If there is no response, then you should file a complaint with the Veterinary Medical Board.

3. If I asked my veterinarian for my pet's x-rays and he refuses, what can I do?

California Code of Regulation section 2032.3 states that radiographs are the property of the facility that originally ordered them to be prepared. Radiographs shall be released to another veterinarian upon request of another veterinarian who has the authorization of the animal owner. Radiographs shall be returned to the veterinary facility which ordered them to be prepared.

4. If I have a balance owing at my veterinarian's office, can the vet hold my pet for payment? There is a Lien Law, which allows a veterinarian to hold your pet until the bill is paid. Boarding charges may be added for the time an animal is held under this law. ([link lien law](#))

5. Is it legal for my veterinary bill to be significantly higher than my original estimate? The VMB does not have jurisdiction over fees. A veterinarian is not required to provide a written estimate. However, you should request a written estimate before authorizing treatment.

6. How can I obtain my veterinarian's license number?

Business and Professions Code section 4850 requires a veterinarian to display the license in his or her principal place of business.

VETERINARIANS

1. Am I required to provide a copy of the records to the client?

Business and Professions Code section 4855 states you shall provide a summary to the client upon request.

2. What information is required to be in the summary of the records?

California Code of Regulations, section 2032.3(b) states that the following information shall be included:

- (1) Name and address of client and animal
- (2) Age, sex, breed, species and color of animal.
- (3) History or pertinent information as it pertains to each animal's medical status.
- (4) Data, including that obtained by instrumentation, from physical examination.
- (5) Treatment and intended treatment plan, including medications, their dosage and frequency of use.
- (6) All medications and treatments prescribed and dispensed, including, strength, dosage, quantity, and frequency.
- (7) Daily progress, if relevant, and disposition of case.

3. How long do we need to keep medical records? Is it the same for x-rays?

California Code of Regulation section 2032.3 requires that the patient medical records be maintained for three years after the date of the last visit. Radiographs are part of the patient medical records and shall be maintained for three years after the date of the last visit.

4. Who can give rabies vaccinations?

Rabies vaccine may be administered by a California-licensed veterinarian, or by veterinary technicians under the direct supervision of a California-licensed veterinarian. For additional information regarding rabies requirements, please contact Department of Health Services at (916-522-9740)

5. Can I keep the sink in the surgery room?

No, the sink must be removed or disabled and covered. A sink in the surgery room creates an area for bacteria to form.

6. Can the x-ray machine be in the surgery room?

Radiographic equipment can be in the surgery room only if it is used for surgical patients only. General radiographic equipment must be housed outside the surgery room.

7. Is a door to the surgery room required, and if so, what type of door?

Yes, a door is required. Either a solid door or a barn-style door is acceptable. Folding, swinging or pocket doors are not acceptable.